

VETAC

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Virginia Educational Technology Advisory Committee Annual Report – 2004-2005

Mission of VETAC:

The Virginia Educational Technology Advisory Committee's mission is to advise the State Board of Education through the Superintendent of Public Instruction on educational technology matters. This role includes, but is not limited to, providing information and recommendations to local schools and advice to the Department of Education on technology policy and funding.

Membership Overview:

VETAC members represent a broad constituency of technology stakeholders in both the public and private sectors. The following groups and organizations are represented: teachers, principals, superintendents, curriculum specialists, educational technology program managers, higher education, professional organizations and the business community. Each member serves as an advocate for technology in the educational setting and acts as a conduit for communication between VETAC and the member's host school division, organization, or affiliate.

Issues Addressed During 2004-05:

VETAC members strive to remain knowledgeable of current and emerging technology applications that have the potential of improving student learning while also contributing to essential educational technology services. To help achieve this goal during the 2004-05 school year, VETAC members advised DOE technology staff through their participation in timely discussion groups covering a number of important technology issues and initiatives. VETAC members also visited two school divisions to observe examples of innovative technology applications in teaching, learning, and management practices.

VETAC Advisory Work

Educational Information Management Systems (EIMS)

Several VETAC members participated in the EIMS pilot program to support the development of a state-level system to collect, report and manage information that pertains to K-12 education in Virginia. We are pleased to have assisted the Department of Education in the development of this new system.

NCLB Title II, Part D Enhancing Education Through Technology (EETT) Program

Title II, Part D assists Virginia school divisions to improve student achievement through the use of technology in elementary and secondary schools. The funding supports ongoing, sustained, and intensive high-quality professional development to integrate advanced technologies into curricula and instruction. Unfortunately, President Bush's budget did not reauthorize funding of the program. To advocate for the reinstatement of this program, the membership sent letters to several key senators and congressmen in support of continued funding of Title II, Part D Enhancing Education Through Technology.

Computer/Technology Standard of Learning Revisions

Members participated in the revision of the Computer/Technology Standards. The standards provide greater opportunity for students to develop, reinforce and amplify their technology skills. We are pleased that the State Board of Education adopted the revised standards.

Educational Technology Leadership Competencies for Administrators

In response to the need for a description of the technology skills and knowledge needed by school administrators, VETAC developed a set of Educational Technology Leadership Competencies for Administrators. These competencies represent key elements of skills and abilities all administrators should exhibit. They are intended to provide a model of technology leadership at the school division or building level. The competencies can be used as a self-assessment to determine performance levels as well as to design a course of professional development to increase administrator skills in the above areas. The competencies focus areas are:

- **Leadership and Vision;**
- **Teaching and Leadership;**
- **Productivity and Professional Practice;**
- **Support, Management, and Operations;**
- **Assessment and Evaluation; and**
- **Social, Legal, and Ethical Issues.**

The Division of Technology will work with the Office of Teacher Licensure to present the competencies to the Advisory Board on Teacher Education and Licensure (ABTEL) as technology standards for administrators. It is hoped that ABTEL will consider requiring these competencies as part of the administrator certification process

Instructional Technology Resource Teacher Guidelines

VETAC members provided input and participated in the review of a set of guidelines for these new technology positions. The DOE staff used this input in the development of a handbook for school divisions as they hire and implement a program of technology support. The handbook contains a description of the position, implementation guidelines and examples of roles and responsibilities.

PRESENTATIONS

Multi-Tiered Licensure for Teachers

Susan Noble, Office of Teacher Quality Enhancement gave a special report to VETAC members at their October 2004 meeting on a major new initiative made possible by the Governor's Teacher Quality Enhancement Grant. The grant provided funding to develop a proposed multi-tiered licensure system for teachers that included computer technology.

Two VETAC members have been selected to work with two staff members from the Office of Educational Technology to draft exemplars of behaviors that teachers should be able to demonstrate when using technology in instruction.

Schools Interoperability Framework Association (SIFA)

VETAC members heard a report from Lan Neugent at their February 2005 meeting on the Schools Interoperability Framework (SIFA). SIFA represents a national effort to ensure that school software programs communicate with each other. Benefits of SIF programs include:

- Reduced manpower hours; and
- Improved accuracy of data.

Several school divisions were selected by the Department of Education to participate in a SIF pilot. Lan Neugent informed VETAC members that the Department of Education had purchased a statewide membership for all Virginia school divisions in the Schools Interoperability Framework Association.

Virginia Learning Infrastructure Initiative & Establishment of Learning Technology Advisory Committee (LTAC)

During the February 2005 VETAC meeting Dr. Alan Edwards, Asst. Director of Academic Affairs & Planning for the State Council of Higher Education, and new VETAC member, provided an overview of a new initiative to establish a Higher Education Learning Technology Advisory Committee for the State Council of Higher Education. In establishing this new advisory committee, five goals were identified for its charge:

- 1) Transform learning environments to improve academic quality and associated learning outcomes, student access, and the appropriate use of scarce resources;
- 2) Promote professional development for faculty and staff in the effective use of technology to improve teaching and learning;
- 3) Collaboratively identify and adopt complementary methods and processes needed to create and sustain transformed learning environments;
- 4) Articulate a policy framework that promotes the creation of transformed learning environments; and
- 5) Showcase emerging and best practices in transformed learning environments.

Jim Carroll, VETAC chairperson has been invited to serve as the VETAC representative on this new advisory committee. Lan Neugent also has been invited to serve on the committee.

VETAC Leadership Award

VETAC annually recognizes a committee member who has demonstrated exceptional leadership, significant VETAC participation, and exemplary commitment to the mission and goals of VETAC. The 2004-05 recipient was Nolan Kilgore, Director of Technology and Administrative Assistant for Wise County Public Schools. Nolan was the Regional Study Group VII representative for VETAC and served for six years on the committee. During his VETAC tenure, Nolan volunteered his school division for a number of innovative VDOE technology pilot projects, and was instrumental in providing strong leadership in bringing quality instructional technology programs to school divisions in southwest Virginia. He is currently serving as Acting Superintendent for Wise County Public Schools.

Site Visits:

During the 2004-05 school year, VETAC held two of its three meetings at school sites. The February meeting was held at Kings Fork High School in Suffolk, Virginia with arrangements made for VETAC's visit by John Littlefield, Vice Chair of VETAC and Coordinator of Technology for Suffolk City Public Schools. Chris Baugh, one of John Littlefield's staff members made a presentation on the assessment system built by Chris and John for Suffolk City Public Schools covering online testing, data reporting and recordkeeping. Chris and John expressed a willingness to share this online local assessment system with other interested Virginia school divisions.

In May, VETAC met at Hanover High School in Mechanicsville, Virginia with arrangements for the visit made by Bill Flaherty, Director of Technology Services for Hanover County Public Schools.

Focus Areas for 2005-06:

During the coming year, VETAC will continue to fulfill its mission through collaboration with the VDOE Technology Division. A part of each meeting will be devoted to discussing current educational technology topics in small work group sessions that should be addressed at the state level. Presentations also are planned covering important technology topics that VETAC members expressed an interest in learning more about. The Executive Committee at their June meeting proposed that VETAC focus most of its efforts during the 2005-06 school year on the following areas:

Work Group Sessions:

1. Revise the Technology Standards for Instructional Personnel (TSIPs) to include new competencies that address technology integration into specific content areas.
2. Review the state technology plan to assess the degree of success in completing goals, objectives, and strategies that can be used by VDOE in drafting a report to the General Assembly and the U.S. Department of Education
3. The third work group session topic will be decided later during the 2005-06 school year.

Suggested Presentation Topics:

Several times during the year, the committee invites experts to make presentations. The committee has identified the following topics for presentations.

1. Instructional Technology Resource Teacher panel discussion.
2. The Online Management of Education Grants Awards (Omega) electronic reporting system created for requesting future technology grant reimbursements.
3. Strategies to address technology security issues.
4. Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP), its advantages and disadvantages.
5. School technology architectural guidelines to consider.
6. Review the status of software in the Commonwealth. How do we make resources available to all Virginia school divisions, including software?